baskets with two weaves filled with custard-apple tree leaves between, and which are impenetrable by rain. There are also hébechets [or: ibichets], which are the sacks through which they strain their manioc flour. Also, there is the couleuvre [lit: 'adder'—because of its snake-like shape?—Ed.], a kind of arm-long sock to press the flour in. They attach the top to a peg and from the bottom roll a staff which they weigh down heavily, either by sitting on it or otherwise, and in no time their flour is dry. Others make matoutous, which are their tables. They are low, some round, some square, a little higher than a cassava. All this small handiwork which we have mentioned is made of certain large rushes that they call oualomam [oualloman] that they dry and split into long, thin strips and paint black or red before using them. The red is from annatto, the black is from [65] the gum tree or the sandalwood which they burn. So that the dyes will be fast, they dissolve the second bark of a certain tree in water, which gives a strong liquid glue. They wet the reeds with this, then put on their annatto or black, then rub the reeds again with the gluey water. After drying in the sun, the paint never comes off. Others among them make belts; others fishing lines and so forth. When they go to bed, they always make a fire beneath their beds.

The Labors of The Women

The women are almost slaves of the men. They provide them with food and drink, take care of the children, and follow them everywhere to prepare their food.

As soon as they get up, they also go to bathe. Then they begin to scrape and shred manioc, make bread for breakfast, and prepare whatever they have for their husbands. Breakfast over, the women go to work. Some go to their gardens to plant manioc or sweet potatoes with a pointed stick, since they do not use hoes; others weed. The men do not trouble at all with that. The women who stay at the hut make cotton hammocks or make oil to rub or grease their husbands' hair with. They make this oil from a seed which they call couâheu. They first let the seed rot, then dry it over the fire, then knead it between their hands, often spitting on it. Then they put it in the sun for a while and afterwards throw it in their couleuvres and press it to squeeze out the oil. They also make oil from the

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

iron file, and a piece of dry rotten wood to catch the spark. The specimen I have has a diameter of 6.5 cm and a total length of 12 cm. These are still in general use, especially among those who go hunting or canoe making in the high woods.

The dried root of the tree fern is used to preserve fire and to carry it from place to place. Spongey and peat-like, this wood will burn for hours without smoke or flame, generating great heat and leaving hardly any ash. Hence the Caribs give it the name "watu hâkuiyâ—voracious fire."

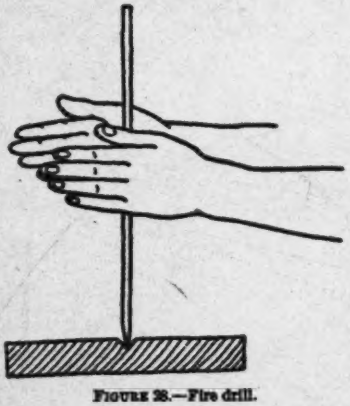

FIGURE 28.—Fire drill.

Torches (flambeaux) of two kinds are still made and used. Gum—usually from the white gommier (*Dacryodes hexandra*), of which practically all the dugout canoes are made—is collected after scraping the bark at the base of the trunk. It is then molded, candlelike, around a central wick made from the pounded wood of the tree fern, of bois diable (*Licania hypleuca*), or of icaque (*Hirtella triandra*). The whole is wrapped in the shroud or outer covering of the unopened palmiste heart, or in that of the yattaghu (?) palm, and bound up with *Bromelia* twine. (The palmiste of the islands is the manicol (*Euterpe* sp.) palm.)

FIGURE 29.—Tinder box, engraved and colored with rocou.

Another kind of torch is made from the so-called bois chandelle (*Amyris* sp.). The wood is merely split lengthwise and bound up in bundles or faisceaux. The gum of the *Icica heptaphylla* (gommier l'encens) is also used for torches, while the gum of the courbaril (*Hymenea courbari*) might well be but is not so used. The size of the torches is largely a matter of taste, the average being about 4 feet long and the thickness of a man's leg. A good gum torch will burn continuously for some 10 to 12 hours, while a candlewood torch lasts only about 2 hours. Both give off a good deal of smoke, which has, however, a pleasant, highly fragrant smell. The candlewood gives, perhaps, the clearer flame.

The gum of the red lowland gommier (*Bursera gummifera*) is more liquid than the preceding and is used only as a plaster applied to cure contusions.

Beeswax is used principally for making into candles and is of two distinct varieties. The common European honey bee, presumably

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

252 opened out nor bordered as is the "canot." At either end a small
415 handle is carved to facilitate manipulation. The cassava canoe is usually about 5 to 6 feet long by about 2 feet high and 18 inches across. When a sufficient quantity of manioc has been grated, the
252 pulp is pressed, in order to remove the poisonous juice, by one of three methods: (*a*) by applying weight or leverage to a matapi (see under basketry) filled with the wet grated manioc; (*b*) by squeezing through leverage a sack made for this purpose from latanier (*Thrinax* sp.) and filled with the grated manioc pulp; (*c*) by wringing out the moisture in a cloth. Thus dried, the grated, squeezed manioc is next passed through the hébichet, or sifter (q. v. under basketry), in order to remove lumps and to render it of an equal fineness. Meanwhile the manioc water, or juice wrung from the grated manioc, has had time to settle in the calabashes in which it was collected. The residue or starch, known here as "moussache," is removed, dried, and either mixed with the meal or set aside for separate use.

[354]

FIGURE 31.—Platine with cassava bread baking under shelter.

354 The dry sifted meal is now ready to be baked on the platine (fig. 31). This, in the old days a slab of stone or earthenware, is today a round sheet of iron, 6 to 10 feet in diameter, heated from beneath, and housed in a special circular shelter of thatch known as the "cafe-platine." On it the meal is baked
252 either into cassavas or into farine. The former is a round flat pancake about three-quarters of an inch thick and 2 feet in diameter. While baking, the meal is patted into shape, flattened, and turned with the help of a miniature paddle (fig. 32), some 2 to 3 feet long, known as a palette. Farine (manioc flour) is likewise baked on the platine, but instead of its being pressed and shaped it is constantly stirred during the process. These two products (together with tannia, yams, edoes, plantain, etc.) constitute the staple food of the Dominica Caribs today.

FIGURE 32.—Cassava palette.

Toumalin (the tamali of the Mexicans?) is still made by the older Caribs in the reserve. It is a brown pungent sauce with peculiar flavor and the consistency of thick gravy, made by the prolonged boiling of the manioc water from which the starch has been removed,